

Improving the orientation of the reception staff of Sunprime C-Lounge hotel

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<p>This productive thesis was created to improve the orientation of the reception staff of Sunprime C-Lounge hotel. The end result of the thesis was an orientation list to make the orientation quicker and simpler. The commissioning party, Sunprime C-Lounge, is a hotel in Alanya, Turkey. The hotel has approximately 85 employees during the summer season and 8 of them work in the front office.</p> <p>The aim was to improve the orientation and that was fulfilled with the orientation list. The hotel had some material but it was not always used to its full potential. The orientation list supports the learning and for it to work effectively and be useful, the other existing material (eg. The operational standards -file) should be used as well. The orientation list also encourages and reminds to use the other materials.</p> <p>The theoretical part concentrates on the basics of orientation, what it actually means, who is the right person to give the orientation, the obstacles and benefits of orientation. The orientation is the most beneficial when it is given by the right, experienced person in the right way and time. Then the new employee is able to work alone faster and more efficiently without mistakes which means for example saved money for the organisation. Another chapter of the theoretical part is work guidance which means teaching the actual work tasks. Both orientation and work guidance are important part of training the new employee and should be done correctly to achieve the best results & avoid mistakes. Especially work guidance is a long process that needs to be evaluated from time to time.</p> <p>This thesis and the orientation list was done during the year of 2016. The process started in the spring time and continued while working in Sunprime C-Lounge for 6 months. When the orientation list was ready it would have been more useful to test it with a new employee comes but there was no new employees starting in that time. However, the front office manager and other receptionists gave their feedback on the orientation list and the whole thesis; they were all satisfied and happy with the results.</p> <p>The discussion part discusses the results of the thesis and how it might have been done better, what could be done in the future to improve the orientation and work guidance. The most important thing is to monitor and develop the whole orientation process and update the orientation list and other material if needed. Feedback from the staff, especially the new employees, is very useful in this process. Also using the existing material makes a major difference already. The orientation and work guidance is a long and even difficult process but with great staff and good material it can be easier. By putting a little bit more time and effort, the company can achieve many advantages from good orientation and work guidance.</p>	
Keywords orientation, orientation list, work guidance	

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1 Introduction

This thesis was created to improve the orientation of the reception staff in Sunprime C-Lounge hotel. Sunprime C-Lounge hotel is a five-star-hotel in Alanya, Turkey and it was also the commissioning party for the thesis. I did my internship there in the fall 2015 and during that time already we talked about a possibility to do my thesis for them. In the end it was decided that improving the orientation of the reception personnel would be a very good topic and that way I could go work for the hotel for the summer season 2016 as well. There was some material for the orientation of new reception employees but it was not used efficiently. For a hotel that aims always for the best outcomes, the best possible orientation and work guidance is very important, creates happier employees and more satisfied customers and all these outcomes usually result also to for example more money saved.

The main aim of the thesis was to improve the orientation and work guidance. After some research and going through the existing orientation material, it came clear that an orientation list would be the most logical one to create. It would be used to make sure all the work tasks are taught and learned, to fasten the whole orientation process but still it would not need much effort or time when used. Also it can be used with older employees to check they know all their tasks. There is already a file of operational standards and another information file so it was not needed to create long instructions of the work (tasks) in the reception but to make a simple tool for the orientation and to make sure the existing material would be used, therefore the orientation list was the best option to improve the orientation.

This thesis is a productive thesis and its' end product is an easy to use tool to improve the orientation based on the theory about orientation and work guidance and experiences of the writer and the other reception personnel and managers. The orientation list was made thinking of this hotel only and it can only be used internally in Sunprime C-Lounge.

The thesis consists of the basic information about the commissioning party Sunprime C-Lounge hotel, the theory basis about orientation and work guidance, description of the process and discussion about the process. The basic information introduces the Sunprime C-Lounge hotel and describes what kind of place the orientation list is made for. Introducing the hotel helps to understand the rest of this report better and more thoroughly. The theory basis is based on different references from literature, articles and websites on the internet that are describing orientation, work guidance and their important points and other facts. In the description of the process I am explaining how the whole process was done

and how it proceeded. The discussion part is a discussion about my opinions about the whole thesis process, how I succeeded to achieve the goals of the thesis, what could have done in a better way and how the orientation list could be maybe developed. In the end of the thesis is the list of used references and two appendices; the GANTT timetable of the thesis process and the orientation list itself.

2 Sunprime C-Lounge

For understanding this thesis and why it was done it is quite necessary to know the organisation. Therefore Sunprime C-Lounge and its services are introduced in this chapter.

Sunprime C-Lounge –hotel is situated in Oba, Alanya in Turkey, approximately five kilometres from the city center of Alanya. It is located 35 kilometres from Gazipasa airport and 150 kilometres from Antalya airport. (Sunprime C-Lounge 2016a) The hotel was opened May 7th 2015 and has six floors (Tjäreborg 2015a). It has 164 rooms and all of the rooms have plenty of amenities for the guests for example a hairdryer, a fridge, air conditioning, an iron and a safe box and further on. It has one open buffet restaurant which offers breakfast, lunch and dinner and also an à la carte restaurant, a patisserie and a snack bar. The hotel bars are in the lobby, by the pool and there is a smaller one on the beach as well. The hotel has meeting facilities, a fitness room and gym, two swimming pools (inside and outside), a minimarket and a Turkish bath and spa facilities with a hairdresser and beauty treatments. The guests are able to go to the hotel's own beach through a tunnel from the outside swimming pool area. (Sunprime C-Lounge 2016a)

Tjäreborg sells packet holidays to Sunprime C-Lounge from Finland and the hotel is classified with four stars in their catalogue. The guests are able to book their rooms via for example booking.com or the hotel's website as well. (Booking.com 2016; Sunprime C-Lounge 2016b). On April 9th 2016, the hotel became the 1st out of 374 hotels in Alanya on Tripadvisor with 139 reviews. (Tripadvisor 2016). Also during the summer season of 2016, August 13th Sunprime C-Lounge earned its fifth star. (Sunprime C-Lounge Facebook 2016)

2.1 Sunprime concept

Sunprime is a Thomas Cook concept that they have for adult holidaymakers. All of the Sunprime hotels are forbidden for guests under 16 years. Everything about the concept from the design to the services has been planned for adults and their taste. All the hotels of this concept have at least 4 stars and have free Wi-Fi, spa areas and good location, among other things. (Thomas Cook 2016) Most of the 14 Sunprime hotels are all inclusive. (Tjäreborg 2015c) For example in Sunprime C-Lounge this means that when arriving, the guests are given a wrist band and with that wrist band all of the meals (excluding room service) and the local drinks are available for free. The guests can also choose to have imported drinks and order room service, just for an extra charge.

2.2 Staff

The hotel had approximately 85 employees and managers altogether in all departments during the summer season of 2016. Most of the employees were Turkish except for the guest relation person and two receptionists. But even these three people (two Finnish and one Swedish person) were really familiar with Turkish (work) culture and habits so the work environment does not always feel so multi-cultural, also most things are done or seen in more Turkish way. Working language in the reception was usually English with some Turkish, Finnish and Swedish. This sometimes caused small misunderstandings but most of the time the information was shared well and clearly to everyone.

At the reception there was one front office chief, five receptionists and two bellboys during the season of summer 2016. A new front office manager and a new bellboy started in October 2016. The front office personnel also worked very closely together with the guest relation person and sometimes managed some of her duties and tasks. One of the receptionist had arrived January 2016, one did her internship there in the previous year and came again in May 2016, one came in June 2016 and two others had been working there from the opening of the hotel. All of the reception employees have experience or education or both in the industry, have learned more at the job and knew their job and its tasks very well. All of the receptionists had been given the same kind of orientation and work guidance, no matter when they had started working at Sunprime C-Lounge.

3 Orientation

In this chapter the term of orientation is explained but it concentrates on the orientation of a completely new employee, not for example training an employee who is coming back to the organisation.

Orientation means all of the actions done so that the new employee knows the organisation, the work environment and the work itself. (Kangas & Hämäläinen 2007, 2; Penttinen & Mäntynen 2007, 2) Orientation can be divided into two main parts; teaching the organisation and instruction of the job tasks (Kangas & Hämäläinen 2007, 2). There are differences when orientating a newcomer depending on for example how long they will be working. If they will be working for only a short time like a summer substitute, the orientation focuses only on the main points. In these kind of cases less time is usually reserved for orientation, compared to a situation when somebody comes in for a regular job. (Kangas & Hämäläinen 2007, 3, 14).

3.1 Orientation of the organisation

Many things are included when the newcomer is learning the organisation. It is important that the new employee gets a good general view of the company, its values, rules and policies. He or she should get to know at least the main points of the organisation of the company. When arriving, the newcomer should meet the work community (the managers and co-workers) and in some cases the customers as well. He or she receives information about work contract related things and where from to get more information if needed. (Kangas & Hämäläinen 2007, 2).

In the hotel industry, the orientation of a front desk employee should include information about the hotel and its history, the key personnel, the benefits & working conditions, the front office team & the job itself, the rules and regulations for both personnel and the guests and the building. In a hotel, it is necessary also to give a tour of the premises for the new employee because they have to know the premises also for the guests benefit. During the tour it is also easier to introduce more fellow staff members and especially the key managers if they were not part of the recruitment process. (Kasaneva 2013, 550)

3.2 Benefits of good orientation

Orientation is important in order for the newcomer to be quickly able to do the job independently without the help of others. This also means that when the orientation is done

right at the first time and the new employee learns the necessary things, the others can more quickly concentrate on their own work instead of the training of the newcomer. When the orientation is done right, the newcomer will make less mistakes in the future and less time is also used for fixing the mistakes. This also means a lot of benefits, such as more happy customers and saved money in many cases. For example, how much money can be lost by a broken customer relationship caused by an employee's incorrect knowledge or skills? Good introduction and orientation can lessen the work related accidents and safety risks as well. (Kangas & Hämäläinen 2007, 4-5; Sommerville 2007, 194).

Orientation also helps the newcomer to commit to the organisation and to feel positive and motivated about the work and the work community. It takes a little bit more time to do the orientation well but it gives back a lot more later on. If the newcomer is welcomed well and the orientation is good, he or she is more motivated about the job and more reluctant to leave the work and the employee turnover rate can be smaller. The new employee is more open to accept the organization's values and objectives and is willing to work harder towards them in his/hers own tasks. (Hyppänen 2007, 283; Kangas & Hämäläinen 2007, 4-5; Strömmer 1999, 162).

A benefit from orientation is also the employee mental wellbeing. If an employee feels unsure of themselves and their work and doesn't feel like part of the work community, they can feel mentally sick and exhausted more easily. Then they might be absent from work more and even burnout. But if the employee believes in themselves and their skills, they are more prone to ask for help if needed. When the employees feels comfortable in the work community, it is easier to work, ask for help and the work does not feel so exhausting or overwhelming. (Kangas & Hämäläinen 2010, 5; Penttinen & Mäntynen 2009, 3-4; Sommerville 2007, 194)

Part of the orientation is also learning who are the fellow staff members and key managers. Introductions during the orientation can make the new employee feel part of the team immediately. (Kasaneva 2013, 551) And as mentioned before, feeling part of the team helps the new employee feel better at their job.

3.3 Challenges of orientation

There are some difficulties of orientation, usually the reason for neglecting the orientation is lack of time or rushing it. Sometimes it just is not carried out or done only partly. (Kjelin & Kuusisto 2003, 241)

Nowadays many workplaces are so busy working hard that giving the orientation is a real challenge. The orientation of the new employee might seem more like burden for the other employees because their own job tasks are tightly scheduled by timetables and usually the job is their first priority. Sometimes the new employee might even be seen as a competitor and not useful for the work community which is why the older employees do not want to teach and orientate the newcomers. It is a responsibility of the management to point out the benefits of good orientation for the work community. That way the other personnel members can understand that they will benefit as well, not just the organization and the new employee. (Kjelin & Kuusisto 2003, 241-242)

Wrong timing might make the orientation even impossible if the right person is absent (eg. on a vacation, business trip) when the new employee arrives. This should be noted as well when deciding the first day of the new employee. Also different kinds of important events or the busy season of the organization offer a great learning opportunity but usually there is not a chance to put effort on the orientation during them. (Kjelin & Kuusisto 2003, 242)

Ambiguity on who gives the orientation might cause problems in the learning process. The new employee might get contradictory information from different people for example how to do a certain job task. This can be avoided by making sure if there is at least one ensured person who is responsible for giving the orientation and making sure the new employee is taught the right, correct things and information. The challenge of learning only small pieces of the job or contradictory information can be caused by an incompetent mentor as well. People named as mentors should be supported by training and instructing them well for their task so they will not cause problems just because they are unable to teach. (Kjelin & Kuusisto 2003, 243)

If the mentor has a mistaken conception of the skills and knowledge of the new employee, the orientation can fail or be inadequate. Sometimes the mentor might trust on the stereotypical and common thought of what people are assumed to know and capable of when planning and starting the orientation. That is why the mentor should survey what is the level of skills and knowledge of the new employee, together with the new employee. Then the mentor can plan the orientation and work guidance based on that, resulting on saved time and to a right and efficient learning process. (Kjelin & Kuusisto 2003, 242)

Sometimes the new employee just does not achieve the learning objectives, no matter how carefully and well the orientation is done. This might be caused by different views of

the job of the management and the new employee or that both of sides have different expectations. The whole recruitment process and the orientation process is expensive for the company and also takes up resources. The new employee is a costly investment and usually the objective is to make the new employee capable of work as fast as possible so he or she will become profitable for the organization. So if the new employee does not learn as quickly as hoped, good communication and discussing about the problem on the early stage might make a change and improve the situation. If that does not happen, it is the most beneficial for both sides to end the employment. That situation can be avoided if the recruitment and the orientation is well taken care of. But if that does happen, the organization should learn from the happened and develop and improve their recruitment and orientation processes. (Kjelin & Kuusisto 2003, 243-245)

3.4 Who gives the orientation

Even if the supervisor does not give the orientation but rather chooses someone else to be a mentor, the orientation and work guidance is still supervisor's responsibility. (Penttinen & Mäntynen 2007, 2.)

Good professional skills aren't enough for the mentor in order to be a good mentor even though the mentor has to know the taught things thoroughly and have quite a lot of experience. Equally important is to have motivation and interest for the task and a good attitude towards the orientation and the new employees. To be able to teach different kinds of learners the mentor should also have an ability to teach. The mentor should be able to have a good interaction skills and to give guidance clearly and consistently. (Kangas Hämäläinen 2007, 6, 14; Rae 2002, 5-8, 15)

It should be clearly stated who are giving the orientation in the organization and what are their responsibilities and tasks, especially compared to the fellow staff or team members of the new employee. The chosen mentors should be ensured to have the prerequisites and given training if needed. Important is that all the employees who have giving orientation and work guidance in their job tasks, have clear instructions and enough guidance for themselves. (Kangas & Hämäläinen 2007, 6)

4 Work guidance

Work guidance means teaching the newcomer the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in the work independently. It is not an unattached action, it's linked tightly to the work and the work community and their ongoing development. The newcomer learns how to do the job correctly right away with planned and well done orientation of the work. When their skills grow, the quality and effectiveness of the work develop as well. When the newcomer is able of independent work as soon as possible, the co-workers don't have to guide him or her in small problematic situations or fix mistakes. It makes everyone's job easier and saves time and work forces. (Kangas & Hämäläinen 2007, 13).

4.1 Planning the work guidance

In order for the work guidance to be as effectiveness as possible, it should be planned and done individually for every new employee. If it not planned beforehand, it can lack logicity and key details might not come across clear. Every one of them is unique and a little bit different from each other so they learn differently. Therefore the orientation should be done according to each situation and individual. If the mentor does not know the newcomer and their skills beforehand, it's recommended that they talk and get familiar with each other before starting the orientation. With the help of right questions and good conversation the mentor can then decide the right way to guide and teach the newcomer. (Kangas & Hämäläinen 2007, 13; Kasaneva 2013; 551).

When planning the work guidance and orientation, what is required from the mentor and from the new employee should be thought of already as well as the objectives. When the objective is clear, planning the work guidance, orientation and possible supplemental material can be done, the timetable of the orientation and a back-up plan for exceptional situations. It is also beneficial to plan the monitoring and evaluation of the orientation and work guidance beforehand. Setting up the smaller learning objectives helps to achieve the main learning objective of learning the job. The learning objectives help keeping the orientation consistent and makes evaluation easier as well. The objectives define what kind of knowledge and skills, in what time and how well the employee is meant to learn. (Kangas & Hämäläinen 2007, 6-7)

When the learning objectives have been defined, it is good to plan the orientation program that the objectives will guide. The plan should include all the subjects and things that are to be taught and the tools and materials that will be used. The time table and the responsible persons or mentors should also be mentioned in the plan. The orientation program works as a good check list for both the mentor and the employee so they know how they

are moving forward towards the learning objectives. The time table makes it easier to have efficient time management but it should be realistic with the learning objectives; how much time it takes to orientate a new employee well. (Kangas & Hämäläinen 2007, 6-7)

Supplemental material supports the orientation. Giving the orientation with the learning material saves time from the learning even though actually making the material might take time. The material can be different kinds of instructions for example the safety instructions and the “Welcome to the Organization” –handbook. It is useful to give or send the material beforehand to the new employee so they can get familiar with it before actually starting the orientation. The new employee can also revise the taught things independently. The material should be updated whenever changes are happening in the organization or it is needed otherwise. It should be clear as well who does the updating and when. To avoid mixing the materials, the date of the updating should also be mentioned. (Kangas & Hämäläinen 2007, 7)

The learning of the new employee can be ensured by monitoring and evaluation. The evaluation discussion of the orientation should be thought of when doing the orientation program so it would not be forgotten. The point of monitoring and evaluation is to ensure that the new employee has learned all the needed things and subjects and there is nothing missing. A good tool for the discussion is a check-list that the mentor and the employee go through together and make sure everything has been taught and learned. (Kangas & Hämäläinen 2007, 7) The monitoring and evaluation also helps to evaluate the orientation and work guidance process of the organization and if it needs changes and improvement. (Kjelin & Kuusisto 2003, 245)

4.2 Process of the work guidance

Vartiainen, Teikkari and Pulkkinen have so called “five steps of work guidance” which is a tool to be used in work guidance. It can be altered according to the mentor, the work environment, the new employee and the situation. There is a lot of different helping tool for work guidance but this is one of the most known in Finland. Like its’ name says it has five different stages; starting the guidance situation, teaching, mental image training, trying out the skill & practising and confirming the learned. Before starting the work guidance, it is important to prepare beforehand as well as possible. (Kangas & Hämäläinen 2007, 14-15)

Preparing well saves time and effort from the guiding itself. It would be good to book a good place and time if necessary (and possible) and lessen any distractions. When the mentor has gotten all the necessary tools ready there is no time wasted looking for them

of the “guiding time”. And if the guidance situation has been thought thoroughly and planned beforehand and the mentor has for example a list of things, things run more smoothly, the mentor can stay on point and he/she won’t forget anything. The new employee can prepare for the guiding by for example reading the given instruction material and thinking of questions. (Kangas & Hämäläinen 2007, 15)

The first step is starting the guidance situation and it means clearing up the topic and the learning objectives. Also evaluating the starting level of the new employee should be done on the first step. The evaluating can be done for example by asking how the new employee would do a job task that he/she says they can do. The work guidance should go hand in hand with the new employee’s skills and knowledge so it is important to know what they know already. It is important and beneficial for learning to strengthen the positive attitude and grow motivation. The mentor can affect this by creating a supportive and trustful atmosphere where it is easy to ask questions and get answers. (Kangas & Hämäläinen 2007, 15)

The second step is guidance itself. The meaning of this phase is that the new employee gets a complete picture of the job task and its’ most important instructions and main rules. A large collection of things to be guided is better divided into smaller parts and the mentor should make sure the new employee knows a certain part before continuing to the next one. Including the new employee by asking questions, reasoning for different things and how something is done the mentor can evaluate at the same time how the learning process is going forward. Telling the new employee why something is done and how it benefits the work helps the learning process as well. (Kangas & Hämäläinen 2007, 15)

Mental image practising helps to concentrate on the work performance and to succeed with it, and it is the third step of this tool. Mental image training helps people to create and finalize their so called internal models. The internal models guide people’s actions and a professionally skilful person doesn’t have to think of every operation because with practice and experience the internal models guide his/hers actions automatically. The mental image practising can be done in different ways, for example the mentor can ask the new employee to explain step by step a work situation they have practised. The new employee concentrates on the task and how to do it, with which tools, basically practising the situation but only by thought. (Kangas & Hämäläinen 2007, 16)

Learning and achieving a skill is only possible through practising and actually doing tasks that require that skill. Therefore trying and practising are the fourth step. The new employee will do the whole job task by themselves, from the beginning to the end while the

mentor just monitors what is done. When the task is done, the new employee thinks about their job and the result and evaluates it. Then the mentor gives feedback of the job task and how it was done. With constructive conversation both can get feedback and if needed the practising continues and more instructions are given. (Kangas & Hämäläinen 2007, 16)

The learning & guiding process is followed during the whole process by the mentor and the new employee, and ensuring the learning objectives have been achieved is the last step. For example if the objective was for the new employee to be able to do tasks independently, it is tested on this step. They can do the job tasks and the mentor watches every once in while how they are succeeding. Another way is to ask the new, trained employee to guide someone else and monitor the situation to know if they have really learned the skill. (Kangas & Hämäläinen 2007, 16)

4.3 Monitoring and evaluation

By monitoring the work of the new, trained employee, the orientation and work guidance plan can be ensured to have succeeded meaning that the new employee has learned what was taught. Monitoring and evaluation can also help answer a lot of questions, for example is everything going according to the plan, should something be changed or practised more, should the teaching methods be changed. Tools for this can be check lists and different conversations. (Kangas & Hämäläinen 2007, 17)

A simple way to monitor and evaluate is to have a check list of the taught tasks or subjects. When something is taught, it can be checked from the list and when it is ensured to be learned, another mark on the list will be put on the list. Usually the mentor or the supervisor will manage marking the list but the new employee who is trained can do it as well. Small tests can be also used but they are better for theoretical things or facts about the organization that they can study by themselves. (Kangas & Hämäläinen 2007, 17-18)

Another practice for monitoring and evaluation the learning is simply a discussing between the mentor and the new employee. A lot of feedback and information can be shared when doing the work but even more beneficial would be filling those conversations with a so called monitoring, evaluation or development discussion that both sides can prepare for beforehand. They can use for example a check list of the orientation and a few before thought questions and comments. Even a short, well prepared and good discussion can give additional information for the mentor about the new employee and their work. These discussions can be done between for example an older employee and his/hers supervisor.

(Kangas & Hämäläinen 2007, 17-18) The evaluation should also make visible how the work guidance has been carried out and how beneficial it has been. (Kjelin & Kuusisto 2003, 245)

Evaluating means all of the tasks that are used for guiding and monitoring the whole learning process, not just achieving the learning objectives. With evaluation, both sides can give and receive information on the situation, the learning process and maybe what should be repeated. When evaluating the new employee, the mentor should remember the starting level of that employee and evaluate them according to that. Evaluation at its best is an excellent way to motivate. (Kangas & Hämäläinen 2007, 18)

The experience of the new employee is an important part of the evaluation. One of the most common ways to evaluate the success of the work guidance actually is evaluating the new employee's satisfaction about the work guidance. It is important to feel satisfaction and good so that the new employee feels positive and commits more to their work. But, the success of the work guidance should be evaluated from the organization's point of view and about the achievement of the organization's goals and objectives. Even if the new employee feels good about the work guidance, it does not mean that the learning objectives for the learning of the new employee have been achieved. (Kjelin & Kuusisto 2003, 245-246)

5 Process description

In this chapter, I explain the process of this thesis more thoroughly. The project properly started in January 2016 and finished in December 2016 when I graduated from Haaga-Helia.

I started to think about doing a thesis for Sunprime C-Lounge when I was doing my internship there during autumn 2015. We talked about different topics (e.g. the chosen one and organizing an event) until January 2016 when we together decided I'll do something to improve the orientation of the reception personnel. It is not so similar with my specialization (Meeting Industry) but I still was more than happy to do this. The idea came from me since I had just noticed that the orientation of the reception was not as well done as it could and should be for a hotel so good and always aiming for the best outcomes. My employer accepted the idea and they were also pleased since this way I was able to combine my thesis with my work at the hotel and work there for a longer time during the season. This also let me have more of an insight to the reception again instead of just asking experiences and interviewing my co-workers. My employer was also pleased about this topic for the thesis as it would mean even better customer service in the reception as well which means a lot to a hotel that wants to achieve excellence and the greatest results in everything.

I knew during the whole spring 2016 that I'd leave from Finland to Turkey around the middle of May. This gave me a real deadline when to have the most of the theory basis written and ready. Of course I was able to finish small bits in Turkey as well but most of the good, useful books were in the library of Haaga-Helia so it was a better idea to finish the theory part when still in Finland. I made myself a GANTT chart (Appendix 1) but it wasn't very binding for me, more like guidelines and reminder to do at least something every once in a while. I was very busy during the spring due to school and work which is the reason why I got a little bit surprised in the beginning of April how little time I had left and then I was even busier writing the theory part of the thesis. But I knew and still know myself well enough to know and remember that I write the best under pressure so I didn't panic too much even though I knew I was running out of time.

Actually starting to write the thesis was a little bit challenging for me. I knew exactly what I had to do but sitting down and starting to write took a little while but when I started, it was easy. Putting together the theoretic part was another challenging part for me because I was combining material in two different languages. Also because the theory felt really clear and simple to me so finding references to the information I had gave some more

challenges to writing. Writing about the hotel itself was really easy because I like working there and I know so much of it.

Like I wrote earlier, the reception did not have so much material that was used for orientating a new employee. But when I was doing my internship, I noticed at least some more material could be really useful and clarify the orientation and training. There is a couple files with information that are not used to their full potential so I decided to create a more simple orientation list that could help a lot and the orientation list will encourage and remind to use the other existing material. Similar to Kangas's and Hämäläinen's idea (page 10) mentioned in the previous chapter concentrating on work guidance, the information files of the reception are given to the new employee to read beforehand so the orientation list can be used while teaching him or her while working.

Really quickly I started sketching in my head what would be included in that list and when I was writing this thesis and working, I kept listing things. A few times near the end of the summer or season I thought the orientation list was ready but then thought of some new things for it. Creating the orientation list seemed like a very simple task at first but then I had to start choosing what kind of list it will be for example how much there will be about the program system. And as visible from the orientation list, the program system is not playing the main part in it even though yes, it is a big part of our work. I didn't want to concentrate on it too much as many things are still done without the program, outside of it. Also my main goal was not to create a manual for the program as I wanted to create a tool for the reception orientation. Kind of the same goes with for example the different forms. All of the forms can be found in the file and from the computers of the reception so they can be explained at the same time when giving the orientation. It was also decided by me, my manager and the guest relation person that even though the reception staff assist the guest relation person, most of the guest relation tasks are not included in the orientation list of the reception personnel.

I didn't get much instructions from my manager what they expected other than something that supports the orientation, they trusted my knowledge and experience. I asked my co-workers and managers what they thought should be included but often they did not have any opinions or had similar thoughts with me. The co-workers opinions were especially needed when I was thinking about the duties in the night shift since I had not worked in that shift before. The difficulties to get more opinions was probably also due to our different points of view and experiences about orientation and work guidance and their importance. I think for example our general manager might have more conservative opinion about these topics and he maybe saw that for example spending too much time and effort

on orientation or work guidance means less time doing the work itself which might mean losing money. Of course too much time should not be spent on them but if you put a little bit more thought effort in the orientation and work guidance of the new employee, the company will actually end up saving money. The managers were also very busy during the season so sometimes getting answers or feedback was a little bit difficult. In the end the managers and co-workers were pleased with the orientation list and my work on it and also really saw and understood the possible benefits of the orientation list which made them understand why I wanted to work on the whole thing to begin with.

In the end all participants were satisfied with the orientation list and we agreed it was ready. We also agreed the subjects listed on the orientation list should be taught in a couple of days, maximum one week, for the new employee. And the tasks should be learned approximately in the same amount of time but this can be altered a little bit according to the learning speed of the new employee who is being taught. We also agreed that the orientation list will be controlled and updated especially when a new employee is coming and when the new employee has given his or hers feedback on the orientation process. This is a responsibility of all the reception staff but the front office manager should make sure with the receptionists that it is actually also done.

During June 2016 a new employee also arrived to the reception of Sunprime C-Lounge. The orientation list was not even remotely finished then but orientating him and giving him the work guidance really gave me very good ideas for the orientation list. I had no information that a new employee would come to work with us therefore I had not prepared the orientation list for that time. Otherwise he would have been a great opportunity to test the orientation list and develop it according to the feedback of the new employee and the experience of the other staff who taught the new employee. But still, his arrival gave good points for the thesis and the orientation list.

When I first went back to Turkey and started working again at Sunprime C-Lounge in May 2016, most of my time was used to getting back on track of everything and how things are so I didn't write my thesis for a while. It was a good and a bad thing actually. After a while I had a fresh mind and new thoughts about my thesis but also almost too fresh mind; it was very difficult to start working on it again. With a little push from mostly myself, I started writing again. Still, it was good I had created a loose timetable for myself. In August I had a couple of weeks when I spent a lot of my free time concentrating on my thesis. Also sometimes during quiet work days I was writing my thesis as I wanted it to be sure to have it done on time and it was a good environment because sometimes I got new points to the orientation list while working or decided it needed other changes.

During September and October I was doing just final touches for my thesis and got feedback from my teacher and from my employer as well, getting ready to present the thesis and finish the process. It was a very great feeling to see the thesis getting ready as I had put so much work and effort in it but still I was also very critical of my work. Even in the last days I found myself reading through the thesis and checking if there is anything else I could add to it. And just like for example the orientation list, this thesis could be controlled and updated every once in a while.

6 Discussion

In this chapter I will evaluate if and how well the aims of this thesis were achieved. Another point of view to this subject is also my own learning of this topic and myself.

The theoretical part supported well the thesis and it was important to know more about orientation and work guidance to be able to create a right kind of tool that ended up being the orientation list. Orientation and work guidance are interesting topics so I could have easily written even more. I had to make difficult decisions about including some topics and excluding others that were not so critical and relevant to this thesis but I think now the theory part is good and informative but not too long. Also the giver of orientation or work guidance felt important to cover in the theoretical part as the orientation list is more used by the mentor than the new employee.

The main aim of this thesis was to improve the orientation of the reception staff in Sunprime C-Lounge hotel. Knowing that some information material already existed but was not used so well, the orientation list seemed a very useful and handy tool to start creating and using. The orientation list supports the learning process but it is the most useful and effective if the other existing material (e.g. The operational standards file) is used as well to train the new employee. The orientation list covers the tasks of the receptionists and is easy to use when giving the orientation to the new employee. The orientation list tells easily to another receptionist what the new employee knows already and what is left to be taught as sometimes this might be unclear. This way all the tasks are covered in the orientation and time and effort (and therefore money) will not be spent teaching the same things or tasks many times if it is not required. With the list it is also easier to check if the new employee has learnt the tasks or does he/she need more guidance and information. It can also be used for the older receptionists to make sure they know all the tasks. Since I have not yet worked in Sunprime C-Lounge during winter season, the orientation list might be a little more concentrated on the summer season but the main tasks are not that different depending on the season.

The reception staff and manager was also asked what should be included in the orientation list so it should be as relevant and correct as possible. It would have been better and more helpful to ask more detailed questions about the orientation experience of the other receptionists but for some reasons I only thought of it too late. Also I would have been happy with some more opinions and feedback from my managers but because of the difficult season they were often busy to give more feedback.

The orientation list should be checked and updated every once in a while to make sure it is up to date and correct. The easiest way to do that is to check it every time a new employee is arriving and orientated as we agreed to try to do at the reception. Before the orientation it is good to go through the list if something has changed since the last updating time. During and after the orientation is good to make notes and ask opinions from the new employee and then change and update the orientation list according to the notes and feedback of the process. All the receptionists are aware of the list and that it should be checked especially if something is changing in the reception but the front office manager has the biggest responsibility to make sure the updating is actually done.

The orientation list will be introduced to all of the reception staff and will be taught to use it when giving orientation and work guidance to the new employee. As told before, it was agreed that the orientation should be done in a few days or maximum one week, this means that the first line of boxes ticked on the list. The other line of boxes (learned) should be ticked approximately in the same amount of time but this depends on the learning speed of the new employee. The new tasks can be taught at the same time but not overlapping too much so the orientation process can be kept clear enough even though the orientation list itself helps not to complicate the process too much.

It would have been great to get a chance to try the orientation list for a new receptionist but during autumn 2016 new receptionists were not hired for the hotel. That could be another part of this process which I would love to do as I will go back to work at Sunprime C-Lounge after graduation. And as also stated in the theoretical part, the orientation is an on-going process and should be evaluated and improved on every possible chance to get the best possible result. And like I mentioned, this list will also be improved whenever possible to make sure it is up to date, relevant and useful.

I have always thought that I am not a good teacher or mentor at work but I learned many useful and new things when putting together this thesis, about orientating and work guidance but about myself and doing projects like this as well. I am sure I can put all of them in use in my work not only in Sunprime C-Lounge but also maybe in some other place later in my career.

The whole process of the thesis was a little bit challenging for me. I should have been stricter with the deadlines I gave for myself but since I knew I had time, I was often not writing when I should have been. I also knew myself enough to know that I concentrate and write the best text right before the deadline. And when thinking afterwards I would

have saved myself from a lot of stress and busy times if I had written more of the thesis more early. Still, I learned new things about myself and about doing a process like this and would do many things differently if I were to do the same thing again for example being stricter with the deadlines, like I mentioned before.

Maybe I could have prepared and researched better for the whole process and thought more thoroughly what and how I will do. Then I would not have made some changes during the writing process about the thesis but of course you cannot always avoid some changes in the process. In the end of the process the topic did not excite me so much anymore and I was mostly just waiting to be finished with the thesis already which made the last chapters come very slowly together. Also in the end I was getting unsure of my work and if it was good enough but that is normal way of thinking. And even when I felt less confident about my thesis, I also still knew that I had done my best and learned along the way and also still achieved my goals for the thesis and my employer was satisfied with the result as well.

All in all, I am satisfied with my thesis and the orientation list and would love it to be used with new reception staff of Sunprime C-Lounge. It is also good to remember the orientation list is made only for the reception of this hotel and cannot be used well in other places without changing some parts.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. GANTT-timetable

	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Choosing the topic										
Searching for the references										
Theoretic basis										
Orientation list										
Discussion part										
Writing process										
Transcribing										
Urkund										
Permission to present										
Presentation										
Theseus										
Graduation										

Appendix 2. Orientation list

Orientation check list

	Name:	
	Taught	Learnt
Basic information about the hotel & the reception	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Information file	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Prices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Security	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Public transport & nearby areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Keys & signatures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Phone & email	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Phonebook of the system	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Taking a reservation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Putting the reservation in the system	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Choosing a room	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Check-in	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Keycards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Wifi-code	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Passports/IDs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Registration form	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Welcome info & maps	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Wrist bands	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Check-in on the system	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Money & paying	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Cash box	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Giving the cash to the general manager	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Exchanging money	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Card reader	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Receipts from the bars	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Room bills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Taking a payment with		
○ Card	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
○ Cash	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Invoices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Paying for eg. music artists	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Guest Relation assisting tasks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• À la carte restaurant reservations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Arranging special days (eg. birthday)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Extra charges	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Ordering flowers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Laundry	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Renting bikes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Arranging a transfer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Car rental	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lost and Found	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Check out	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Departure pick up times	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Lunch packet orders	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Late check out	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Room bills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Check-out on the system	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Passports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Informing other departments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Housekeeping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Technic service (note in the system)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reports, forms & lists	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Police report	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Day check list	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• General Manager's report	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Different forms (eg. notification form)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Different lists (eg. list of rooms of people with disabilities)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Different cards & what we send with each	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Electrical things	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Music from the main computer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Alarms from the system room	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Lobby music	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Lights (when/which ones)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>